

Employee Assistance Programme: The Case of a Local Municipality in South Africa

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ABSTRACT This paper focuses on the implementation of an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) in the Makhado local municipality in Limpopo. It interrogates the challenges encountered in implementing the programme by examining the employees' views and opinions. A self-administered, semi-structured questionnaire and face-to-face interviews were used to gather data. A key contribution of this paper is a model of an ideal EAP, which the researchers named Platinum, which should be comprehensive in terms of coverage; accessible in terms of distance; approachable in terms of staff manning the unit; adopt a macro-micro approach; have a dedicated contingent of qualified staff and required resources; meet the needs of both the employers and employees; and undergo regular review. The paper revealed that there is a general level of awareness and positive attitude towards the EAP on the part of employees. It is accessible and adequate, although not perceived to be comprehensive enough. Many employees were generally happy and perceived the EAP as addressing their challenges. However, the majority of the employees were not aware of the EAP policy within the municipality and did not participate in its formulation. The paper recommends the development of innovative marketing strategies that take into cognisance the literacy levels of employees within the municipality for effective implementation.